

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

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FILE NAME: 336 N Robert Street – Pioneer-Endicott Buildings  
DATE OF APPLICATION: April 19, 2013  
APPLICANT: Serigraphics Sign Systems  
OWNER: Rich Pakonen  
DATE OF REVIEW: May 23, 2013  
HPC SITE/DISTRICT: Individual Site; Pioneer and Endicott Buildings  
CATEGORY: Pivotal  
CLASSIFICATION: Sign Permit  
STAFF INVESTIGATION AND REPORT: Christine Boulware  
DATE: April 22, 2013

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**A. SITE DESCRIPTION:**

The HPC Site Nomination Form (1979) states that the Pioneer and Endicott/Midwest Buildings were built at different times and were originally independent structures until 1941, when they were physically joined with combined mechanical and circulation systems and have been managed and owned as a single office/commercial complex since. They were also considered together when placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974.

The Pioneer Building is a sixteen story combination bearing-wall and iron frame structure that was designed by Chicago architect Solon S. Beman. It was constructed as a twelve-story building in 1889 in a Romanesque Revival style to house the Pioneer Press Printing Company. The lower two stories are primarily stone and the upper stories are primarily brick. The uppermost four stories were added in 1910 and Beman was commissioned to design the addition which he did in a more straightforward non-revival Commercial style. The building is representative of the evolution of American commercial architecture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The building is historically important as the former home of the Saint Paul Pioneer Press, Minnesota's oldest newspaper and because it was Saint Paul's first skyscraper. Other building firsts include: housing the first commercial broadcasting station in Minnesota, having the first glass-walled elevators in the nation, and the first commercial telephone answering service.

The Endicott/Midwest Building is an L-shaped structure that wraps around the Pioneer Building and has two architecturally distinct facades, one on Robert Street and one on Fourth Street. The six story building was built in 1890 as a combination bearing wall and iron frame structure. It was designed by renowned architect Cass Gilbert and is considered one of the finest examples of Italian Renaissance Revival architecture in the state.

**B. PROPOSED CHANGES:**

The applicant proposes to install a vertically oriented, 30' by 4' banner sign on the Pioneer Building's southwest corner, facing south toward the Robert Street Bridge. This is one of the building's two primary façades. The sign reads "PIONEERENDICOTT.COM NOW LEASING 877-480-8177." It is designed to advertise leasing space and spans floors 4 through 6. The design features white lettering and burnt orange logos on a black background and is made of scrim with sewn hems and brass grommets across the top seam. The banner is anchored by a series of 3/16" screws attached in mortar joints.

**C. BACKGROUND:**

In August 2009, the HPC approved an after-the-fact building permit, by the previous owner, to repair and/or remove a chimney and certain masonry on the buildings. The site has received HPC staff approvals over the years for various work such as window and mortar repair, and

including a recent approval to partially remove and repair a chimney (April 2013). The recent permits relate to the current rehabilitation of the building into apartments.

#### **D. GUIDELINE CITATIONS:**

##### Preservation Program for both buildings (1979):

*The exterior appearance of the **Pioneer Building** should be preserved in a manner consistent with the original design intent. (This applies to the building facades visible from the street: the west and south facades and the upper seven floors on the east façade.) The upper cornice is an important design element and should be preserved. Regular inspection and maintenance of the cornice is encouraged for aesthetic and safety reasons. The lower window lintels in the southwest corners which have been engraved with "Pioneer Press" should not be obscured. If possible, restoration of the bulletin board area in the lower southwestern corner is encouraged. Original fenestration should be preserved. Signs and other attachments should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image nor distract from the unity of the façade, but should be integrated in a manner which complements the over-all design.*

*The exterior appearance of the **Endicott-Midwest Building** should be preserved in a manner consistent with the original design intent. (This applies to all building facades visible from the street: the south and south east facades on Fourth Street, and the west façade on Robert Street.) The cornice is an important design element and should be preserved. Regular inspection and maintenance of the cornice is encouraged for aesthetic and safety reasons. Original fenestration should be preserved. Signs and other attachments should not conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image nor distract from the unity of the façade, but should be integrated in a manner which complements the over-all design.*

##### The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation relating to new construction:

**9.** *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize a property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*

**10.** *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

#### **E. FINDINGS:**

1. The properties are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are locally designated as Heritage Preservation Sites. They are pivotal historic structures that contribute to Saint Paul's architectural and historical fabric.
2. The banner sign does not *conceal architectural detail, clutter the building's image nor distract from the unity of the façade*. Rather, it is a single sign placed in a plain brick portion of the façade near the corner. The scale of the banner is large for a real estate or lease sign. The vertical orientation and size fit this vertical space in a manner that *complements the over-all design*.
3. The proposed sign attaches to mortar joints, rather than to brick, so as to *not destroy historic materials... that characterize (the) property*. The method of attachment allows the sign to be removed in the future so that *the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired*.
4. Illumination was not proposed.

5. For lease, fabric signs are not considered permanent and therefore imposing a time limit for installation would be reasonable
6. This proposal will not have an adverse impact on the site's Program for Preservation provided the conditions are met.

**F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Based on the findings, staff recommends approval of the permit application provided the following conditions are met:

1. The proposed sign shall be attached into mortar joints only.
2. The banner shall be removed one year after the date the permit is issued. At the one year mark, a smaller, permanent sign could be proposed; the banner could be removed or an application for a time extension for the approved banner could be applied for.
3. Any revisions to the approved plans shall be submitted to staff and/or the HPC for consideration.

**G. ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Application with photos and plans
2. Written testimony- none received



Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission  
 Department of Planning and Economic Development  
 25 Fourth Street West, Suite 1400  
 Saint Paul, MN 55102  
 Phone: (651) 266-9078

REVISED  
 4-19-13

-CB  
 -KZ

#43538

## HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION

This application must be completed in addition to the appropriate city permit application if the affected property is an individually designated landmark or located within an historic district. For applications that must be reviewed by the Heritage Preservation Commission refer to the HPC Meeting schedule for meeting dates and deadlines.

### 1. CATEGORY

Please check the category that best describes the proposed work

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repair/Rehabilitation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign/Awning | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction/Addition/<br>Alteration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moving                | <input type="checkbox"/> Fence/Retaining Wall   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Application Review Only              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____            |   |

### 2. PROJECT ADDRESS

Street and number: 336 N Robert Street Zip Code: 55101

### 3. APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of contact person: Eric Anderson

Company: Serigraphics Sign Systems, Inc.

Street and number: 2401 Nevada Ave. N

City: Minneapolis State: MN Zip Code: 55427

Phone number: (763) 277-7774 e-mail: erica@SerigraphicsSign.com  
X20

### 4. PROPERTY OWNER(S) INFORMATION (If different from applicant)

Name: Rich Pakonen

Street and number: 350 Saint Peter Street, Suite 200

City: St. Paul State: MN Zip Code: 55102

Phone number: (651) 224-6901 e-mail: RPakonen@Pakproperties.net

**5. PROJECT ARCHITECT (If applicable)**

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Street and number: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Completely describe ALL exterior changes being proposed for the property. Include changes to architectural details such as windows, doors, siding, railings, steps, trim, roof, foundation or porches. Attach specifications for doors, windows, lighting and other features, if applicable, including color and material samples.

*Serigraphics is to install 4' X 30' Banner on the Pioneer Building. (See Location & Shop drawings)*

*Attach additional sheets if necessary*

**7. ATTACHMENTS**

Refer to the *Design Review Process sheet* for required information or attachments.

**\*\*INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED\*\***

**ARE THE NECESSARY ATTACHMENTS AND INFORMATION INCLUDED?**

**YES**

Will any federal money be used in this project?

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_

Are you applying for the Investment Tax Credits?

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_



I, the undersigned, understand that the Design Review Application is limited to the aforementioned work to the affected property. I further understand that any additional exterior work to be done under my ownership must be submitted by application to the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission. Any unauthorized work will be required to be removed.

Signature of applicant: [Signature] Date: 3/18/13

Signature of owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR HPC OFFICE USE ONLY**

Date received: RECEIVED APR 23 2013 FILE NO. 13-026  
District: \_\_\_\_\_/Individual Site: PIONEER ENDCOTT  
Contributing/Non-contributing/Pivotal/Supportive/: \_\_\_\_\_  
Type of work: Minor/Moderate/Major

\_\_\_\_ Requires staff review

Requires Commission review

Supporting data: YES NO  
Complete application: YES NO

The following condition(s) must be met in order for application to conform to preservation program:

**It has been determined that the work to be performed pursuant to the application does not adversely affect the program for preservation and architectural control of the heritage preservation district or site (Ch.73.06).**

\_\_\_\_\_  
HPC staff approval

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted:

- 3 Sets of Plans
- 15 Sets of Plans reduced to 8 1/2" by 11" or 11" by 17"
- Photographs
- City Permit Application
- Complete HPC Design Review application

Hearing Date set for: 5.23.13

City Permit # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Seri Graphics

2401 Nevada Ave N

Minneapolis, MN 55427

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this note as written authorization granting permission to Seri Graphics for installation of an exterior banner on Pioneer Endicott per the specs and approved plans, as well as all approvals of required parties.

Thank You,

  
Alissa Kellogg

PAK Properties

REVISED  
4-19-13

-CB  
-KZ

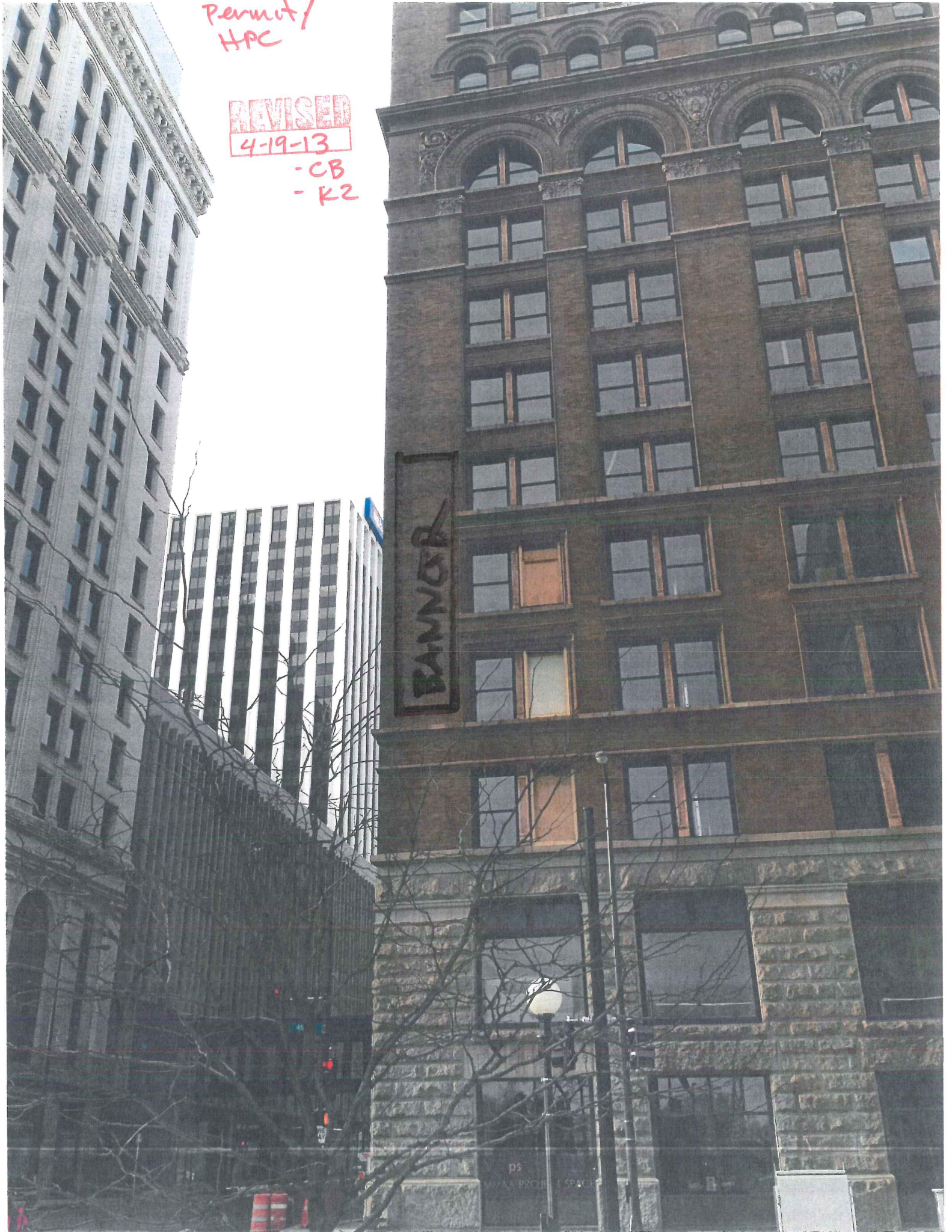


Permit/  
HPC

REVISED

4-19-13

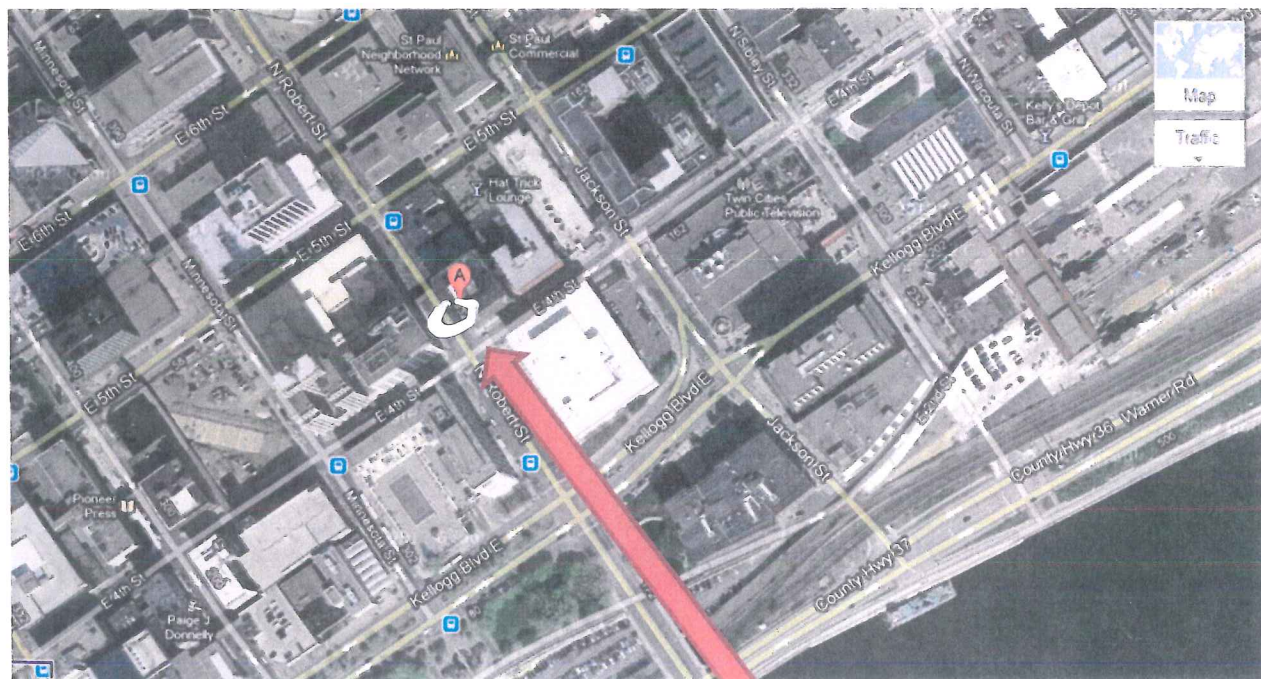
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BANNER

ps  
WAA PROJECT SPACE





**Address: Pioneer Building**

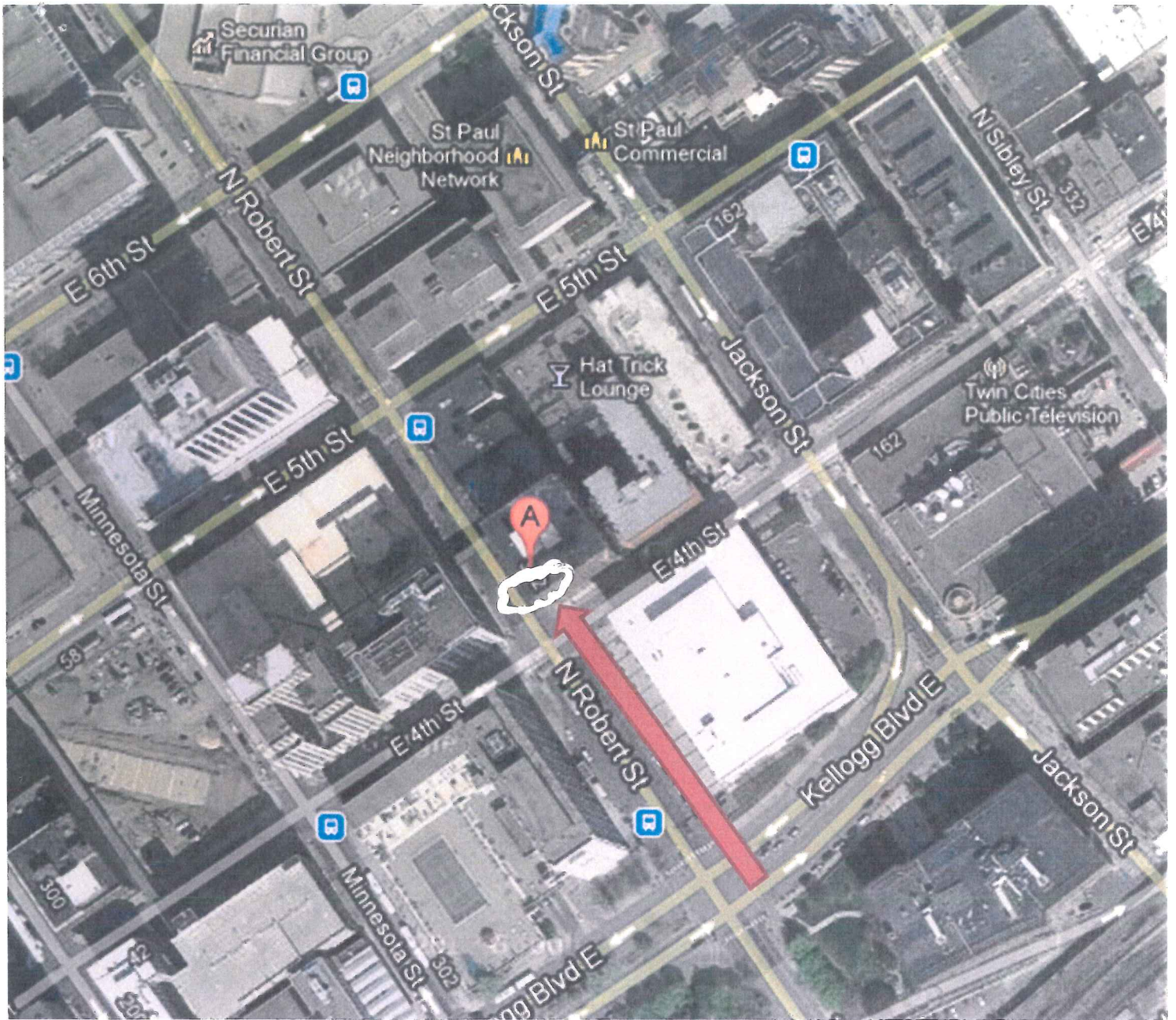
**336 N Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101**

Banner to be mounted on the corner of East 4<sup>th</sup> Street and North Robert St. (Banner facing East 4<sup>th</sup> Street)

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4-19-13  
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